

FOLLOW-UP REPORT

NORCO COLLEGE

2001 Third Street
Norco, California 92860

Submitted October 15, 2010
to the Accrediting Commission for
Community and Junior Colleges
Western Association of Schools and Colleges

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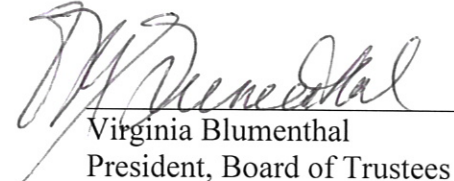
CERTIFICATION OF THE *FOLLOW-UP REPORT*
September 21, 2010

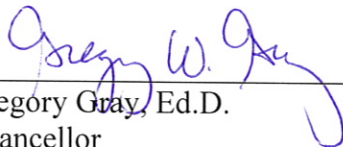
To: Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges
Western Association of Schools and Colleges


From: Norco College
2001 Third Street
Norco, California 92860


This Follow-up Report is submitted per the requirements of the Accrediting Commission.

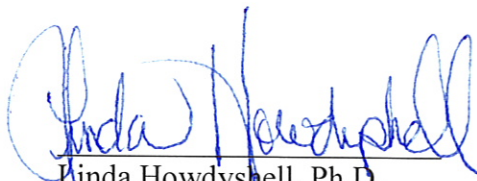
We certify that there was broad participation by the College community, and we believe that the Follow-up Report accurately reflects our response to the recommendations of the 2009 Accreditation Visiting Team.



Virginia Blumenthal
President, Board of Trustees
Riverside Community College District

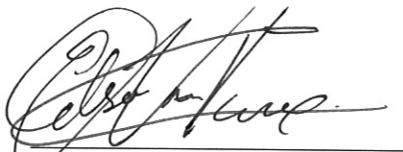

Gregory Gray, Ed.D.
Chancellor
Riverside Community College District

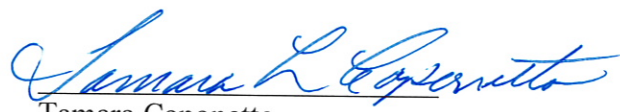

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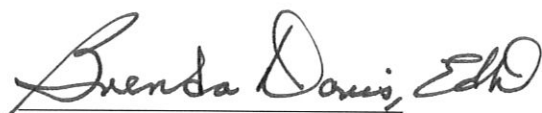
STATEMENT OF FOLLOW-UP REPORT PREPARATION

This Follow-up Report documents the activity of Norco College to resolve the three recommendations contained in the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges Action Letter of January 29, 2010. Upon receipt of the Action Letter granting initial accreditation to Norco College, the president of the college immediately convened the college-community members to address the issues identified in the commission's recommendations.

In addressing the recommendations, the college drew upon the participation of the strategic planning subcommittees and the Norco Strategic Planning Committee (NSPC), which functions as a committee of the whole, with all faculty members, staff, administrators, and students invited to participate.

In May 2010, the final review draft of the Follow-up Report was sent electronically to all college faculty and staff. The report was approved by the Academic Senate on May 19, 2010, and the NSPC approved the report on May 25, 2010. The Riverside Community College District Board of Trustees formally accepted the report at the June 15, 2010, Board of Trustees meeting. On September 21, 2010, the Board of Trustees of the Riverside Community College District received an update of the Follow-up Report.

Norco College respectfully submits this Follow-up Report as a summary of the college's institutional response to the recommendations of the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC).



Brenda Davis, Ed.D.
President

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Dr. Sharon Crasnow	Academic Senate President
Mr. David Mills	Report Editor
Mr. James Sutton	Evidence Coordinator

Response to Team’s Recommendations and Commission’s Action Letter

Recommendation 1

In order to increase institutional effectiveness, the team recommends the college establish and document a policy for the regular evaluation of its integrated institutional planning, budgeting, and decision-making processes and that the results be widely disseminated and used to improve the process. (I.B.3, 6, 7; III.B; IV.B.3.g)

Status: Goal Met

Action Taken

At the time of the October 2009 accreditation visit, the college had ongoing practices in place for evaluating the effectiveness of its integrated planning, budgeting, and decision-making processes. Existing procedures included an annual survey of the membership of the Norco Strategic Planning Committee (NSPC) and an annual memorandum from the college president to NSPC membership notifying the committee with regard to the resource allocation decisions that had been made based on the committee’s prioritized recommendations. While acknowledging these existing efforts, the visiting team felt that the college’s evaluative processes and procedures needed to be formalized.

In response to this recommendation, a policy-and-procedures document was developed to clearly document the ongoing process of evaluating, analyzing, and publishing the results of a systematic review of the effectiveness of institutional processes. The policy was reviewed by the Institutional Mission and Effectiveness Subcommittee, and the subcommittee added additional evaluative mechanisms and a timeline for the completion of annual evaluative tasks. The subcommittee approved the policy on March 23, 2010. The Strategic Planning Co-Chairs Council reviewed the policy on April 6, 2010, at which time the co-chairs voted to forward it to NSPC (committee of the whole) with a recommendation for approval. Following the review and approval by the Co-Chairs Council, the NSPC approved the Policy and Procedures for Regular Effective Evaluation of Integrated Institutional Planning, Budgeting, and Decision-Making Processes 2010-01 electronically, and the policy was moved forward for the college president’s approval.

This policy ensures that:

- Planning, program review, and all resource allocations are effectively integrated.
- The allocation of resources is driven by goals and objectives identified in the College Educational Master Plan; programmatic initiatives enumerated in annual program review documents; and evidence of effectiveness in achieving course-, program-, and institutional-level student learning outcomes is broadly shared.
- The concerns of stakeholders (students, faculty, staff, administrators, and the communities served by the college) are ascertained on a regular basis and continually incorporated into the college’s planning, resource allocation, and decision-making processes.

Evidence

The establishment and implementation of the NSPC Policy 2010-01 (EV.1.A) is the foundational evidence that the institution assures systematic review of the planning and decision-making processes. The policy and procedures approved by the NSPC include six formal evaluative mechanisms. These six mechanisms of evaluation are described below, and the result of each evaluation is explained. These evaluations provide documentation that the policy has been successfully implemented and that it assesses the effectiveness of its cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, and resource allocation.

First Method of Evaluation: The Annual Survey of Effectiveness of Academic, Administrative and Student Services Planning Councils

Status: Goal Met

At the end of November of each academic year, participating members of each planning council will, by surveying members, determine their degree of satisfaction with committee-level planning, program review, resource allocation, and decision-making processes; annually evaluate the criteria used and their perceptions regarding the degree to which these processes are effective and linked at the planning-council level. (Pg.1 of NSPC Policy 2010-01)

The college's Academic Planning Council (EV.1.B), Administrative Planning Council (EV.1.C), and Student Services Planning Council (EV.1.D)—each comprised of faculty, staff, and administrators—meet every summer to review and prioritize staffing and other needs identified through the annual program review process. In fall, the councils meet to evaluate the prioritization process, and improvements are made to the upcoming process. Throughout the year—but with more frequency in spring—the administration makes funding decisions based upon the councils' recommendations. At the end of the fiscal year, all instructional and student services annual program reviews are due, and the councils prioritize needs guided by agreed-upon criteria related to improving student achievement and aligned with goals from the Educational Master Plan (EV.1.E) and Long Range Strategic Planning Document (EV.1.F). The councils' prioritization process is transparent, for all meeting minutes and funding decisions are posted on the intranet for employee review.

Immediately after this policy was approved, a preliminary survey of all three councils was completed to assess how successful each council was in following through with the goals set out by its individual mission statement. The results follow on the next page. A comprehensive survey of all three councils will be completed in November of 2010.

Results and Explanation of Results

ACADEMIC PLANNING COUNCIL PRE-SURVEY 2010

1. Academic Planning Council (APC) serves in an advisory capacity to campus administrators on matters concerning faculty hiring.						
	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A	Response Count
	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	7
2. The APC serves in an advisory capacity on matters concerning budget planning.						
	71.4%	14.3%	14.3%	0%	0%	7
3. The APC serves in an advisory capacity to campus administrators on matters concerning capital expenditures.						
	57.1%	14.3%	14.3%	14.3%	0%	7
4. The APC serves in an advisory capacity to campus administrators on matters concerning course scheduling and staffing.						
	85.7%	14.3%	0%	0%	0%	7
5. The APC serves in an advisory capacity to campus administrators on matters concerning program development.						
	57.1%	42.9%	0%	0%	0%	7

ADMINISTRATIVE PLANNING PRE-SURVEY COUNCIL 2010

1. Overall, the Administrative Planning Council is effective in providing support and recommendations to the Norco Strategic Planning Committee.						
	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A	Response Count
	66.7%	33.3%	0%	0%	0%	6
2. The Administrative Planning Council provides support and recommendations to the Norco Campus Strategic Planning Committee on matters relative to resource allocation for classified positions requested by administrative departments.						
	66.7%	16.7%	0%	16.7%	0%	6
3. The Administrative Planning Council provides support and recommendations to the Norco Campus Strategic Planning Committee on matters relative to resource allocation for equipment requested by administrative departments.						
	66.7%	33.3%	0%	0%	0%	6

STUDENT SERVICES PLANNING PRE-SURVEY COUNCIL 2010

1. The Student Services Planning Council works closely with the program review process.						
	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A	Response Count
	80%	20%	0%	0%	0%	5
2. The Student Services Planning Council produces recommendations to increase the effectiveness of student services programs.						
	60%	20%	20%	0%	0%	5
3. The Student Services Planning Council is effective in providing guidance to administrative decision-makers on matters of staffing requests.						
	60%	40%	0%	0%	0%	5
4. The Student Services Planning Council is effective in providing guidance to administrative decision-makers.						
	80%	20%	0%	0%	0%	5

The Academic, Administrative, and Student Services Planning Councils’ positive responses on all five objectives (91.42, 94.5, and 95 percent respectively) indicate that the committee members believe they were valuable participants in hiring, budgeting, capital expenditures, and program development.

Second Method of Evaluation: Memorandum from College President to Norco Strategic Planning Committee Membership Summarizing Resource Allocation Decisions (EV.1.G)

Status: Goal Met

In March of each academic year, the college president will submit a memorandum to the committee membership that identifies which of the faculty and staff positions identified in the previous year’s program review and prioritized by the Strategic Planning Committee will be recommended for funding. In instances in which the president’s decisions do not correspond to the recommendations of the Strategic Planning Committee, a detailed rationale for the divergence will be provided. (Pg.1 of NSPC Policy 2010-01)

Evidence

The college president has provided an annual memo since the 2006-07 academic year. All four memos are available in the “Annual Evaluation Report: Regular Evaluation of Integrated Institutional Planning, Budgeting and Decision-Making Processes 2010” (pp. 8-15) (EV.1.H), which can be found in the appendix. The president gave NSPC the fourth memo on May 21, 2010; the timing was due to the district’s delay in finalizing the college and district budgets. Each memo explains how the results of program review align with resource allocation. Memos are disseminated via email, and printed copies are available to all stakeholders.

Third Method of Evaluation: Annual Progress Report on Educational Master Plan Goals, Objectives, and “Dashboard Indicators” (EV.1.I)

This report, to be prepared by the college’s Office of Student Success, shall be presented at the May Strategic Planning Committee meeting of each academic year. (Pg.2 of NSPC Policy 2010-01)

Results and Explanation of Results

The Norco Educational Master Plan asserts six goals. The Annual Progress Report assesses the progress that has been made on all of these goals. Each goal is listed below, and the current progress is delineated.

Goal 1: Increase student retention, persistence, and success

Status: Goal Met

- “Norco College will reduce its first-semester attrition rate (based on first-time college students enrolled in fall semester) from 48 percent to 42 percent in three years and to 38 percent in five years.”
 - Year 1—fall 06 to spring 07 attrition: 40.3%
 - Year 2—fall 07 to spring 08 attrition: 39.5%
 - Year 3—fall 08 to spring 09 attrition: 33.3%

- “Norco College will reduce its first-year attrition rate from 64 percent to 58 percent in three years and to 52 percent in five years.”
 - Year 1—fall 06 to fall 07 attrition: 53.7%
 - Year 2—fall 07 to fall 08 attrition: 53.2%
 - Year 3—fall 08 to fall 09 attrition: 50.8%

- “Norco College will increase the percentage of students who declare degree and/or transfer as their educational goal and complete a Student Educational Plan (SEP) to 25 percent in three years and 50 percent in five years.”
 - fall 06—SEP Completion Rate: 2.2%
 - fall 07—SEP Completion Rate: 21.8%
 - fall 08—SEP Completion Rate: 47.8%

This rate is comprised of all students who declared degree or transfer and were enrolled in the fall semester. In fall 07, the method by which SEPs and student goals were input to the matriculation data file was changed by the State Chancellor’s Office, allowing the college to report students based on services received rather than enrollment. In fall 08, interventions were implemented to increase the number of students developing SEPs.

Goal 2: Improve the quality of student life

- “Norco College will increase the number of students who report spending more than six hours per week on campus as reported on the Community College Student Experiences Questionnaire (CCSEQ) from 13.6 percent to 20 percent by 2010 and to 25 percent by 2012.”

The CCSEQ is an instrument that can be administered to community college student populations, examining their “quality of effort” by measuring how effectively and extensively curricular and extra-curricular opportunities are being enjoyed and used. The CCSEQ was implemented longitudinally in 2004, 2006 and 2008; however, because another instrument, the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), is widely used and recognizes national comparisons across community colleges, Norco College adopted the CCSSE as the instrument to measure student life and satisfaction for 2010. Recognizing how vital longitudinal data is, Norco College mapped the questions from the CCSEQ to the CCSSE so data is available from 2004.

On the 2010 CCSSE survey, 18.1 percent of students responding reported spending more than six hours per week on campus outside of class time.

The Student Success Committee is analyzing this outcome to determine if this goal is the most appropriate milestone.

- “Norco College will increase attendance at student clubs or organization meetings (as reported on the CCSEQ) from 29.1 percent to 35 percent by 2010 and to 40 percent by 2012.”

On the 2010 CCSSE, 29.2 percent of students reported some participation in student organizations.

- “Norco College will increase the rate of participation in a college project or event sponsored by a student organization or club (as reported on the CCSEQ) from 22.1 percent to 28 percent by 2010 and to 34 percent by 2012.”

Of students responding to the 2010 CCSSE, only 18.2 % reported some participation in an event sponsored by a student organization.

A possible explanation for the decrease is that the question on the CCSSE was phrased in terms of “how many hours in a typical week” a student participated in an event while the CCSEQ was phrased in terms of “how often in the current school year” a student participated in an event. This difference in phrasing may account for the lower percentage since a respondent who rarely participates in one of these events may mark “None” regarding a typical week but may mark “Occasionally” in regard to the current school year.

- “Norco College will increase the rate of attendance at school plays, dances, concerts, and theater productions (as reported on the CCSEQ) from 31.3 percent to 36 percent by 2010 and to 41 percent by 2012.”

Thirty-eight percent of students responding to the 2010 CCSSE reported attendance or participation in activities related to arts, music, or theater.

- “Norco College will increase the rate of participation in athletics and recreation (as reported on the CCSEQ) from 16.2 percent to 21 percent by 2010 and to 26 percent by 2012.”

The 2010 CCSSE demonstrated that 24.2 percent of students responding to the survey reported some participation in athletic activities or events on campus.

- “Norco College will increase the rate of participation in a student group or club-sponsored project or event off-campus (as reported on the CCSEQ) from 18.6 percent to 24 percent by 2010 and to 29 percent by 2012.”

Of students responding to the 2010 CCSSE survey, 28.5percent reported some participation in off-campus activities related to college.

Goal 3: Increase student access

Status: Goal Met

- “Norco College will achieve an enrollment growth target of 3.8 percent annually until 2024 and then 3 percent thereafter until 2038.”

The growth rate at Norco has significantly exceeded the enrollment-growth target as evidenced by the chart below:

Fall	Headcount	% Growth
2006	8,678	
2007	9,164	5%
2008	9,864	7%
2009	10,953	10%

- “Norco College will work toward achieving and maintaining the racial/ethnic distribution of faculty, staff, and students that is representative of the population of the Riverside Community College District service area.”

As indicated on the following chart, Norco College is slightly underrepresented in the category of Hispanics. Beginning in fall 2009, Norco College revised the Student Equity Plan to provide research and strategies for recruitment of students from the local Hispanic community over the next three years. Also, Norco

College was recently awarded a Title V Hispanic-Serving Institution grant with objectives to increase the numbers of Hispanic students in career and technical fields with an emphasis on Gaming Technology.

Ethnicity	Norco College	Norco/Corona/Riverside
White	37.9%	39.8%
Black	8.9%	6.0%
Hispanic	39.6%	44.7%
Native American	0.8%	0.5%
Asian/Pac Islander	10.8%	7.0%
Other	2 %	0.2%
Multiracial	0.0%	1.9%

- “Norco College will expand access to its programs and services both on the Norco College campus as well as the area south of Corona. Toward this end, the college will establish a south Corona educational center by 2013 and enroll 1,000 FTES at the center by 2018.”

The district is evaluating potential sites in south Corona, and the president of Norco College has been meeting with district representatives on this item. More importantly, the Board of Trustees has identified the south Corona center as a priority; therefore, the 2013 timeline is still a reasonable goal.

- “Norco College will work with the city of Norco to approve and construct a roadway providing southerly ingress and egress to Norco College.”

Discussions with the city on the roadway are ongoing. The Corona Unified School District has agreed to partner with the College in negotiations with the city of Norco. A new traffic light and expanded striping will temporarily ease traffic congestion on Hamner Avenue and Third Street. Also, a tweaking of the schedule will result in fewer cars exiting at the same time.

- “Norco College will maintain its current student-faculty ratio.”

In 2007-08, Norco College had a faculty/student ratio of one faculty member to every 24 students. In 2008-09, Norco College had a faculty/student ratio of one faculty member to every 27 students. Norco College has been successful at maintaining a favorable student-faculty ratio.

Goal 4: Enhance academic programs and the learning environment to meet student and community needs

- “Eighty percent of the programs at Norco College will be self-sufficient—with students being able to complete them by taking courses only at the Norco College—in three years; 100 percent will be self-sufficient in five years.”

Currently, 12 out of 20 certificate programs have all of the courses offered at Norco College, and 100 percent of the courses needed to complete the eight AA/AS degree programs are offered here at the college.

- “Norco College will make steady progress—through carefully adding additional new courses and programs, through more aggressive marketing, and through having more students complete student educational plans (SEPs)—in closing the gap between its current student profile, as defined by students’ educational goals, and the desired 40/40/20 percent distribution. This means that 40 percent of students would seek to earn a degree or certificate, 40 percent would be preparing for transfer, and 20 percent would be attending the college for personal development.”

The current Norco College student educational goal distribution is listed below:

Degrees/Certificates:	10.8%
Transfer:	56.7%
Personal Development:	32.5%

With the introduction of new career technical programs and new grants, Norco College is creating programs and marketing that promotes both degree and certificate completion.

- “Norco College will place the enhancement of its library as a top priority. By 2012, twenty percent of the collection will be made up of materials published after 2000, and fifty percent of the volumes will have been selected by Norco College faculty.”

Fifty-three percent of the library collection consists of materials published after 2000. Thirty-two percent of its volumes have been selected by Norco College faculty. This progress demonstrates that Norco College is well underway toward meeting its 2012 target of fifty percent of its volumes being selected by Norco College faculty.

- “Program-level SLOs will be identified for 100 percent of Norco programs by 2009.”

One hundred percent of all programs offered at Norco have identified program-level SLOs.

- The Instructional and Student Services Program Review processes have two parts:

1. Comprehensive Instructional Program Review, which occurs every four years (based on a rotation in which one quarter of the units report each year), focuses on each discipline's courses, pedagogy, assessment plan, and future goals and objectives related to the improvement of student achievement and learning.

All academic programs offered at Norco College have been reviewed within three years of the development of the 2006 Norco Educational Master Plan. In fact, the majority of academic programs (89 percent) have completed two cycles of comprehensive program review.

2. Annual Program Review Update requires each discipline and student-service area to address its needs for resources (faculty, staff, space, equipment, etc.) and to provide a report on outcomes-assessment activities for the prior year.

Student Services conducts its Comprehensive Program Review annually. The results of program review have been used to continually make decisions on ways to improve program practices, resulting in appropriate improvements in student achievement, learning, and institutional effectiveness. All Student Services Programs have completed at least three cycles of the comprehensive program review. All administrative areas participate in an annual program review process and have completed three cycles since the 2006 Norco Educational Master Plan.

Goal 5: Enhance institutional effectiveness

- “Norco College will develop and activate an independent website by the beginning of the fall 2008 enrollment period.”

By fall 2008, Norco College had a link from the RCCD website that redirected students to Norco-specific information rendered in Norco College's color schemes. The development/activation of the college specific website (i.e. www.NorcoCollege.edu) will move forward once decisions on the Norco College mark, seal, and logo have been made by the College Branding Committee.

The www.NorcoCollege.edu domain has been purchased.

- “Norco College will publish its own college catalog by September 2009.”

In September of 2009, Norco College published its own college catalog.

- “Norco College will create a marketing plan by September 2009.”

The marketing plan has been implemented.

Fourth Method of Evaluation: Survey of Strategic Planning Committee Membership (EV.1.J)

Status: Goal Met

At the May Strategic Planning Committee meeting of each academic year, the membership of the committee (which constitutes a “committee of the whole” with all faculty, staff, students, and administrators invited to participate) will be surveyed to determine their degree of satisfaction with college planning, program review, resource allocation, and decision-making processes as well as their perceptions regarding the degree to which these processes are effectively linked. (Page 1 of NSPC Policy 2010-01)

The first annual questionnaire of the Norco Strategic Planning Committee (NSPC) (EV.1.K) was an extensive, 69-question survey covering the four standards for accreditation. After results of the assessment were reviewed, it was determined that a more focused survey would be better for evaluating planning effectiveness.

Results and Explanation of Results

The revised survey was distributed to evaluate the perceived effectiveness of the planning, budgeting, and decision-making processes. The results indicated that over 90 percent of the respondents were satisfied with the planning process.

Fifth Method of Evaluation: Annual Open Dialogue Session (EV.1.L)

This session, to be conducted toward the end of each academic year in late May or early June, will provide all Norco College stakeholders with an opportunity for open dialogue concerning the extent to which college planning, program review, resource allocation, and decision-making processes contribute to the achievement of course-, program- and institutional-level student learning outcomes. (Page 2 of the NSPC Policy 2010-01)

The Strategic Planning Open Dialogue session occurred on June 4, 2010, with participants representing the entire college constituency in attendance.

Results and Explanation of Results

During the June 2010 open dialogue session, college planning, program review, resource allocation, and decision-making processes were reviewed to improve institutional effectiveness. A comprehensive annual report summarizing the results of the open dialogue session was presented at the first meeting of the Norco Strategic Planning Committee in fall 2010.

Sixth Method of Evaluation: Annual Evaluation Report (EV.1.M)

Status: Goal Met

The report, to be prepared by the Office of Student Success, will include an analysis of Steps One through Five and will be transmitted to the NSPC at the first meeting of each academic year, at which time the committee membership

will be invited to make suggestions for improving the process. Any recommended provisions to the procedures and processes, if approved by the college president, will be incorporated into the next year's cycle. (Page 2 of the NSPC Policy 2010-01)

The Annual Evaluation Report was disseminated to all stakeholders in September 2010. To demonstrate both wide distribution and receipt of this document, the email correspondence had an electronic link that confirmed it had been received.

Results and Explanation of Results

While some procedures for evaluation existed previously, by refining its policies and procedures for evaluating integrated institutional planning, budgeting, and decision-making, Norco College has institutionalized its processes in a clearly delineated manner and in a way that is disseminated widely to the entire college community.

Recommendation 1 has been resolved.

Recommendation 2:

In order to comply with the ACCJC Distance Education policy, for all programs, certificates or degrees where 50 percent or more of the requirements are delivered via distance learning and may be completed at the Norco College, the team recommends submission of a substantive change proposal. (II.A.1b, d; II.B.1, B.2a; II.C.1, 2c)

As was reported in Norco Campus's 2007 Self-Study in support of initial accreditation, for several years, students have been able to complete 50 percent or more of the requirements for a number of degrees and certificates offered by Norco College (and previously, Campus) via distance learning. The report from the October 2007 accreditation visiting team did not include a recommendation that the campus submit a substantive change proposal because the submittal of a substantive change proposal by the Norco Campus prior to its initial accreditation as an independent college would have been inconsistent with the accreditation standards. Having achieved initial accreditation, Norco College took action to prepare the substantive change proposal recommended by the 2009 visiting team.

In February and March 2010, the college administrative team, with the support of the District Office of Educational Services, prepared a substantive change proposal for ACCJC that identifies the degrees and certificates for which 50 percent or more of the requirements are delivered via distance learning. The substantive change proposal was reviewed by the Norco Strategic Planning Co-Chairs Council (EV.2.A) on April 6, 2010 and forwarded to the NSPC with a recommendation for approval. The document was approved by the NSPC (EV.2.B) via an electronic vote conducted between April 15–20, 2010 and by the Riverside Community College District Board of Trustees (EV.2.C) on April 20, 2010.

The Substantive Change Proposal was submitted to ACCJC in May 2010 to comply with the deadline for consideration at the June 2010 meeting of the commission's Substantive Change Committee. The commission deferred a decision by requesting additional information. The

areas for which more information was requested included student retention success rates, the organization of distance education offerings, and the online availability of student services, such as counseling. These questions have been answered; a response was submitted to the commission on September 30, 2010.

The Substantive Change Proposal and Addendum (EV.2.D) is included as Appendix 2 to this report.

Recommendation 2 has been resolved.

Recommendation 3:

In order to meet the standard, the team recommends that the college validate all departmental examinations for their effectiveness in measuring student learning and to ensure that they minimize test bias (II.A.2.g). (EV.3.A)

Action Taken

There are currently three disciplines that offer departmental examinations in the following courses: Reading 81, Spanish 1, and ESL 55. The math department has six common questions that appear on final exams also. All three departmental examinations from each course are undergoing a three-part validation process, each part addressing an aspect of the accreditation visiting team's concerns. The math department's common questions were validated for effectiveness in measuring student learning.

I. Cultural Impact (“minimizing test bias”)

To ensure that a comprehensive validation process for minimizing test bias is attained, a cultural impact assessment was utilized as a qualitative method. In the Cultural Impact Model, representatives of special populations and the college community participate in focus groups. These focus groups, overseen by a facilitator who not only coordinates the discussion but takes notes for future content analysis, read through the departmental examinations and discuss the cultural impacts of the examinations' questions. Three committees of Norco College—Academic Senate (EV.3.B), Student Success Committee (EV.3.C), and Norco Legacy Diversity Committee (EV.3.D)—were identified as participants for the Cultural Impact Model (EV.3.E). The resulting data were analyzed and, upon completion of the analysis, reports were forwarded to their respective departments and faculty for discussion and action.

Analysis of Evidence

Again, this is the first time that cultural impact was studied as a validation study, so the findings are preliminary and serve at best as a baseline measure. These baseline findings concluded that there existed minimal gender biases in the English as a Second Language exam (EV.3.F), minimal cultural biases (national versus international traditions/perceptions) in the reading exam (EV.3.G), and no biases in the Spanish exam (EV.3.H). Both the English as a Second Language and the reading disciplines are now determining what changes should be made to eliminate the minimal gender bias found in their departmental exams.

II. Disproportionate Impact (“minimizing test bias”) (EV.3.I)

In order to minimize test bias on the departmental examinations, the college employed a method known as “disproportionate impact on special populations.” This model is designed to provide preliminary data in monitoring departmental examinations for disproportionate impact on various demographic groups. The method links the departmental examination scores to students’ age, disability, status, ethnicity, and gender. Special populations consist of groups that are recognized in the Norco College Student Equity Plan (EV.3.J) and those included in the MIS Data Element Dictionary. This methodology, based on Design 12 for ACCJC-recommended design strategy to measure disproportionate impact, was completed following spring 2010 final exams. The reports were forwarded to their respective departments and faculty for discussion and follow-up.

Analysis of Results

The analysis for disproportionate impact yielded no significant differences between any groups for finals in the courses.

III. SLO Mapping (“effectiveness in measuring student learning”) (EV.3.K)

All departmental final examinations, including math’s common questions, supported their course-level SLOs. Upon the completion of departmental examinations at the end of spring 2010, the data from each exam (EV.3.L-rea) (EV.3.M-esl) (EV.3.N-spa) were used to generate SLO reports (EV.3.O-rea) (EV.3.P-esl) (EV.3.Q-spa) unique to the exam. For example, the Spanish 1 final exam supports five SLOs. The corresponding SLO reports subsequently generated, determined the effectiveness of a departmental examination in measuring student learning; these reports featured an average score that measures the degree to which students learn within the scope of each learning outcome. The reports were forwarded to their respective departments and faculty.

Analysis of Evidence

Spanish has been doing SLO reports for two of their course SLOs for three semesters. Because of the important information SLO mapping yielded for two of their SLOs, the Spanish faculty has decided to apply the SLO-mapping technique for all Spanish 1 and Spanish 2 SLOs. Changes in the Spanish 1 exam have been made as a result of the data.

Currently with the common math questions (N=6) on math finals, the cultural impact study techniques are not appropriate because math is a universal language. However, data analysis is done on how the common math questions support and measure student learning outcomes. In terms of validation with disproportionate impact and to continue the current process of student anonymity, this fall 2010 we are implementing disproportionate impact study based on the categories recognized by Student Equity to the final grades of the course and see if there is any impact based on age, race, gender and/or disability.

Recommendation 3 has been resolved.

Summary and Conclusion

This Follow-up Report serves as evidence of Norco College's commitment to effectively address the three recommendations of the Accrediting Commission contained in its January 29, 2010, Action Letter. As regards the first recommendation, the college now has a formal Strategic Planning and Procedures policy in place; it also has documented processes for evaluating its integrated institutional planning, budgeting, and decision-making apparatus that are accompanied by effective mechanisms for disseminating the results and using them to improve the process. As to the second, the college has submitted a Substantive Change Proposal and Addendum in compliance with the ACCJC Distance Education Policy. In satisfaction of the third, the college has completed the first stage of an ongoing research project designed to validate all departmental examinations for their effectiveness in measuring student learning and ensuring that test bias is minimized.